AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A computer system for performing expedited startup operations, comprising:

a processor;

a system startup memory coupled to the processor;

a basic input/output system (BIOS) memory coupled to the processor, the BIOS memory comprising instructions for initiating startup operations; and

a hard disk drive storage device, comprising

a storage media comprising at least one drive platter for storing a program module that is loaded in the system startup memory during startup operations,

a non-volatile cache memory for storing a copy of the program module stored on the storage media, and

a microcontroller for controlling access to the storage media and the non-volatile cache memory, said microcontroller configured to retrieve the program module from the non-volatile cache memory in response to a read request from the processor if the storage media is not operational when the read request is received by the hard disk drive storage device.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 1 [[2]], where the cache memory comprises a battery-backed CMOS memory.

4. (Original) The computer system of claim 1, where the program module comprises an initial program load module that is loaded into the system startup memory and executed by the processor to load an operating system for the computer system.

5. (Original) The computer system of claim 4, where the initial program load module comprises a master boot record, a boot load program and a kernel program.

6. (Original) The computer system of claim 1, where the hard disk drive storage device comprises a RAID array.

7. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 1 [[2]], where the hard disk drive storage device further comprises a microcontroller memory for storing a module that maintains coherency between the storage media and the non-volatile cache memory.

8. (Original) The computer system of claim 7, further comprising a threshold table stored in the hard disk drive storage device, said threshold table containing, for at least one sector of the storage media, a minimum threshold count value, wherein the module clears a sector in the non-volatile cache memory only if a cache miss count meets or exceeds the minimum threshold count value for that sector.

9. (Currently Amended) A method for retrieving a program module from a first storage device during startup operations, comprising:

executing BIOS instructions for initiating startup operations;

initiating operating system load operations by requesting the [[a]] program module from the [[for a]] first hard disk drive storage device comprised of a first storage media and a non-volatile cache storage media; and

retrieving said program module from the non-volatile cache storage media if the first storage media is not operational to provide said program module.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the non-volatile cache storage media comprises a cache memory.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, where the cache memory comprises a battery-backed CMOS memory.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9, where the program module comprises an initial program load module that is loaded into a system startup memory and executed by a processor to load an operating system for a computer system.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, where the initial program load module comprises a master boot record, a boot load program and a kernel program.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising maintaining cache coherency between at least a part of the first storage media and the non-volatile cache storage media.

15. (Original) The method of claim 9, further comprising executing the program module to load an operating system into a system memory.

16. (Currently Amended) In an information handling system, a disk drive storage device, comprising:

at least one drive platter for storing a program module,

a non-volatile cache memory for storing a copy of the program module, and

a microcontroller for controlling access to the drive platter and the non-volatile cache memory, said microcontroller configured to retrieve the program module from the non-volatile cache memory in response to a read request from a processor if the drive platter is not operational when the read request is received by the disk drive storage device.

17. (Cancelled).

18. (Currently Amended) The disk drive storage device of claim 16, where the non-volatile cache memory comprises a battery-backed CMOS memory.

19. (Original) The disk drive storage device of claim 16, where the program module comprises a master boot record that is loaded into a system startup memory and executed by a processor to load an operating system.

20. (Currently Amended) The disk drive storage device of claim 16, where the microcontroller executes a coherence program to maintain coherency between the drive platter and the non-volatile cache memory.